Topper Tricks

How to Score More in Exams

Simple tips that work in **all essay type exams**
from school to university and from arts to science

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Version 1.2

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Background

I used to get *lower than expected marks* in exams. At times, even students I helped understand concepts, scored more than me.

Over the course of time, I figured out it was *because of bad handwriting* - a difficult thing to improve after a certain age.

But I figured out methods to score better despite this weakness. The tips I share are *useful for everyone*.

Even, if your handwriting is good they will help you.

How to use this document?

Use this as a *reference guide*

Take a *printout* or *save* it on your PC/phone

Review before each exam, till it is internalized.
Even I need to revisit the tips from time to time.

What do you need to score more?

Knowledge

The better you know the topic, the more content you have to answer the questions. We all know this, and try to the best of our ability.

But, do we remember all or even most of what we read over the course of our preparation? No. So we end up struggling during the exam.

How can you improve?
Learn Smartly – there are techniques to help you remember more for a longer period of time.

Reach out to the author for '*Workshop on Smart Learning*'

Presentation

In the exam, we write all that we know. What we forget is that the examiner will read it – and marks are based on the reading. As a result, when he looks at our answer sheet what he sees is blackened paper with words all over.

Does he have time to read through everything? No. So even great answers end up getting just above average marks.

How can you improve?
Present Smartly – in this document we cover some tips that can make your answers much more readable – to show you know in less than a minute per answer.

Reach out to the author for '*Practical Workshop on Smart Presentations*'

Please Note.

Here are the key points related to presenting answers that you may want to keep in mind. We discuss these in detail in the following pages.

1
Give your answers an explicit structure

- Structure the Content
- Make the Structure Explicit

2
Give your answers some space

- Frame the answer
- Space out the sections
- Let the points breathe
- Don’t force-fit the words

3
Give your answers a nice look

- Hierarchies
- Pyramids
- Process Flows
- Timelines
- Tables

1. Give your answers an explicit structure...

1
Structure the Content

- Simple tips you may have already learnt in school. Divide the answer into sections and sub-sections:
  - Introduction
  - Content/Body
    - Divide further by topics, or, points
    - Use technical keywords and highlight them
  - Conclusion/Summary
- Some of you may already be doing this. *How can you improve?* Make the structure explicit.

2
Make the Structure Explicit

- Just a glance should give the examiner an idea about the content:
  - Explicitly state 'Introduction', topic names and 'Summary'
  - Divide content into short, easy to read paragraphs
  - Make a point using bulleted or numerical lists
  - "Quote" the quotes with space before and after
- Give structure to your overall answer sheet – indicate the beginning and end of answers clearly using lines, asterisks, etc.

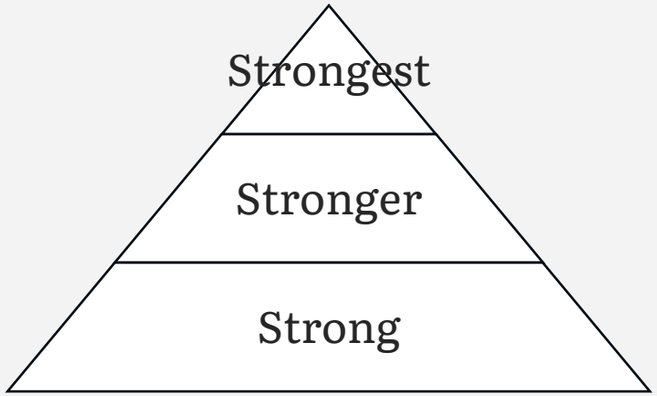
2. Give your answers some space…

‘Frame’ the answer	• Leave sufficient margins on all sides, about an inch should be sufficient – this would be similar to framing a picture
Space out the sections	• For long answers - let a new section start on a new page • For short answers - leave a couple of horizontal lines after each section
Let the points breathe	• Leave a line after any points that run into more than three horizontal lines
Don’t force-fit the words	• Don’t try to squeeze in a 10 character word in the space for a 2 character one. Don’t break it into parts either. • Just take it to the next line.

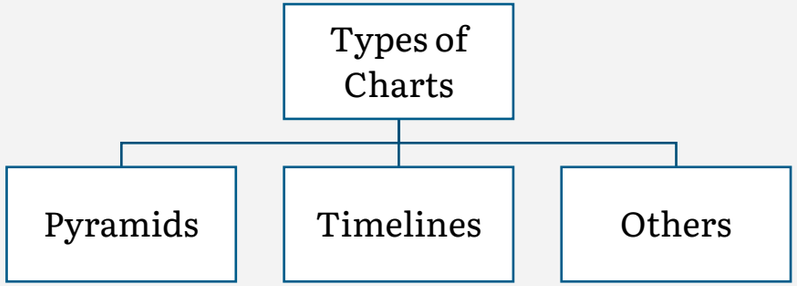
3. Give your answers a nice look...

Pick from the below list or create your own stunning visual for your answer:

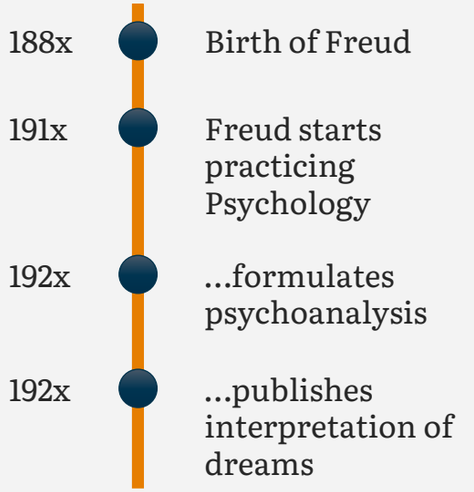
Pyramids (hierarchical lists)



Multi-level Hierarchies



Timelines



Processes

- Find the recipe of the item you wish to cook
- Gather all condiments required for the dish

- Just do as the recipe says

- Serve chilled or smoking hot – again whatever the recipe says

- Take some of the dish in the spoon
- Open your mouth
- Put the contents of the spoon inside
- Close your mouth and chew

Tables/Matrices

Exam period	Result
Before 'smart presentation'	Average
After 'smart presentation'	Very Good

A Quick Summary...

How to Score More in Exams – A Summary

Learn Smartly

The better you know the topic, the more content you have to answer the questions. We all know this, and try to the best of our ability. But we have limitations, due to the crude methods that we use for learning. Use advance learning techniques to help you remember more content and for a longer period of time.

Present Smartly

How you present your answers determines how much you score - to a degree more than what is commonly acknowledged. These very simple tips will help you score better.

Give your answers
An Explicit Structure

- **Structure the Content**
  Divide into sections and sub-sections
- **Make the Structure Explicit**
  Divide content into visually convenient components – lines between answers, titles for content, points in lists, explanations in short paragraphs.

Give your answers
Some Space

- **Frame the answer**
  Margins on all sides
- **Space out the sections**
  Space after each section
- **Let the points breathe**
  Leave a line or two after each point
- **Don't force-fit the words**
  Don't break or squeeze words

Give your answers
A Nice Look

- **Hierarchies**
  For multi-level categorization
- **Pyramids**
  For single-level hierarchical lists
- **Process Flows**
  For processes with sequential steps
- **Timelines**
  For telling history or age-based change
- **Tables/Matrices**
  Tables to neatly organize data and matrices to show 2-3 dimensional relationships

So, what next?

Are you preparing for your exams?

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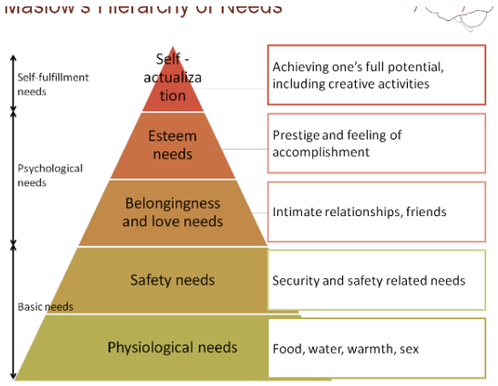
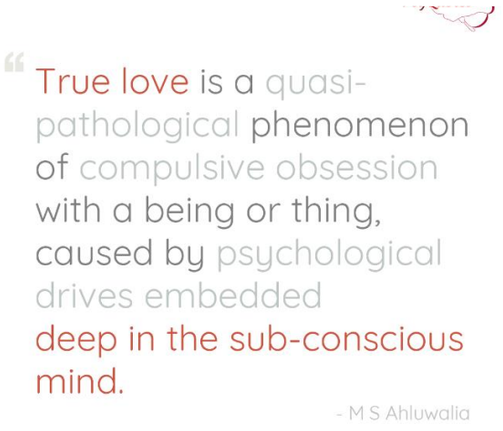


Maslow's theory categorizes human needs into a hierarchy and only after a need at the lower level is satisfied can a need at the higher level be satisfied.

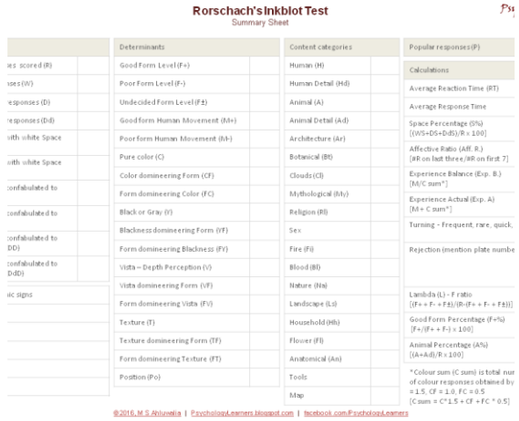
Memes that help you understand and remember complicated concepts.

PsyQuotes


True love is a quasi-pathological phenomenon of compulsive obsession with a being or thing, caused by psychological drives embedded deep in the sub-conscious mind.
- M S Ahluwalia

Quotes related to psychology, complete with explanations to help understand their real context and meaning

PsyTemplates



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